



General Assembly

Distr.: General
24 June 1998

Original: English

Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples

Dissemination of information on decolonization during the period from May 1997 to June 1998

Report of the Department of Public Information

A. Introduction

1. At its fifty-second session, the General Assembly, in paragraph 3 of its resolution 52/79 of 10 December 1997 entitled "Dissemination of information on decolonization", requested the Department of Public Information to give publicity to the work of the United Nations in the field of decolonization. The present report covers the activities undertaken by the Department of Public Information during the period from May 1997 to June 1998.

2. The Department's multimedia activities covered a wide range of issues pertaining to decolonization. It also continued to provide coverage with regard to the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism (1990-2000). The adoption of resolution 52/79 was highlighted by the Department's daily news programmes for broadcasting organizations worldwide and received emphasis in its press release service.

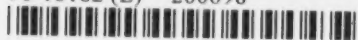
part of its regular coverage of United Nations activities. They related to the work of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and of the General Assembly. The press releases were made available to the news media and were distributed electronically to United Nations information centres and services and were posted on the United Nations home page of the World Wide Web. Posters, pamphlets and other relevant materials were furnished to journalists upon request.

4. The Department made arrangements through the United Nations Development Programme for a press officer to be assigned to cover the Pacific Regional Seminar, held in Nadi, Fiji, from 16 to 18 June 1998.

5. With regard to paragraph 3 of resolution 52/79 and its reference to the Internet, a total of 628 documents on decolonization are now available at the United Nations Web site.

B. Press

3. The Department issued a total of 180 press releases in English and French on issues relating to decolonization as



C. Publications

6. The *UN Chronicle*, a quarterly magazine of the United Nations, regularly covered major developments in the field of decolonization, including the work of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) of the General Assembly (No. 1, 1998), and published an article entitled "The United Nations and the New World Agenda", by Robert F. Van Lierop, former Permanent Representative of the Permanent Mission of Vanuatu to the United Nations, now a practising lawyer in New York (No. 1, 1997).

7. The forthcoming revised edition of *Basic Facts* will contain an updated chapter on the activities and achievements of the United Nations in the area of decolonization.

8. During the period under review, a comprehensive overview of decolonization issues was prepared for publication in two editions of the *Yearbook of the United Nations*, the regular edition covering the year 1995 (30 pages) and the backlog edition for 1989 (30 pages). The 1996 edition will also give comprehensive coverage of decolonization issues.

D. Radio and Central News Service

9. During the reporting period, the Radio and Central News Service covered various issues concerning decolonization and related issues in news bulletins, weekly current affairs magazines and weekly regional magazine programmes. They were produced in official and non-official languages for worldwide dissemination. The programmes dealt with self-determination, self-determination of the United States Virgin Islands, violent incidents in East Timor, Nobel Peace Prize co-winner Jose Ramos Horta's call for cessation of all armed activities in East Timor, environmental issues in the Non-Self-Governing Territories, the decisions of the Special Committee concerning the remaining Territories in the Caribbean, the need to assist the Territories to attain sustained economic growth and social advancement, the call of the Special Committee for political education programmes on the Territories, the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Western Sahara, the question of relocation of people in Montserrat owing to volcanic eruption and the question of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas).

10. In addition, the Service produced five feature programmes on decolonization and related issues in various languages, namely, "Women in the Resistance Movement:

East Timor" (English), "Puerto Rico's Future" (Spanish), "Ramos Horta: A Nobel Peace Prize Winner on East Timor" (Portuguese), "East Timor: A Political Situation" (Portuguese), and "Portugal and Indonesia: Negotiating East Timor" (Portuguese).

11. On the occasion of the special meeting marking the observance of the Week of Solidarity with the Peoples of All Colonial Territories Fighting for Freedom, Independence and Human Rights, held at Headquarters on 22 May 1998, the Service organized two interviews, one with the Chief Minister of Montserrat, the Honourable David Brandt, and one with the Acting Chairman of the Special Committee, Mr. Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla.

E. Television/video

12. During the reporting period, activities within the United Nations system related to decolonization were televised and disseminated through feeds and dubs made available to networks and other television stations and through packages of television news and video highlights provided to international news syndicators. The Department's audio/visual library continued to make tapes and cassettes available to correspondents, delegates, United Nations radio producers and outside producers on decolonization issues.

F. United Nations information centres

13. Throughout the year, United Nations information centres around the world contributed to disseminating information on decolonization in the context of promoting a better public understanding of the work of the Organization. The Information Centres in Jakarta and Lisbon provided logistical and information support to the Personal Representative of the Secretary-General for East Timor on his visits to Indonesia and Portugal, respectively. The Centre in Lisbon also assisted the Secretary-General's Personal Envoy to Western Sahara with information and logistical support on the Envoy's visit to Portugal. On the question of Puerto Rico, the Information Centre in Washington, D.C., presented the United Nations perspective in response to an article published in a local non-governmental organization publication.

G. Non-governmental organizations/public inquiries

14. To promote awareness among the non-governmental organization community of United Nations activities on decolonization, the Department continued to disseminate information materials to each of the 1,550 non-governmental organizations associated with it. The Public Inquiries Unit responded to 160 queries and complied with requests made for information on decolonization through the dispatch of materials such as handouts, publications, pamphlets, booklets and brochures. The Unit responded to many inquiries through e-mail.
